

Claims

1. Apparatus for charging or discharging a piezoelectric element (1 and/or 11₁, 12₁, ... 1n₁), characterized in that
5 a current is regulated as a function of a time characteristic and an event characteristic to achieve an effective low average current.

2. Apparatus for charging or discharging a piezoelectric
10 element (1 and/or 11₁, 12₁, ... 1n₁) of a fuel injection system, characterized in that a current of the fuel injection system is regulated as a function of a time characteristic and an event characteristic to achieve an effective low average current.

3. Apparatus as according to claims 1 or 2, characterized
15 in that the current is regulated by switching a charge or discharge switch (3, 5) as the function of the time characteristic and the event characteristic to achieve the effective low average current.
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4. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims,
characterized in that when the current is at a level below
25 a predefined lower threshold, the charge switch remains open for a predefined time interval to allow the current to exhibit a gap.

5. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims,
characterized in that a charge switch (3) or a discharge
30 switch (5) of the apparatus is switched from an OFF position to an ON position or from the ON position to an OFF position, respectively to allow or stop charging or

discharging when an absolute value of the current is respectively equal to or greater than or less than the event characteristic which is a predefined limit threshold current.

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6. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that a charge or discharge switch (3, 5) of the apparatus is switched from the OFF position to the ON position to allow charging or discharging at a predefined time of the time characteristic after the absolute value of the current is equal to or less than the event characteristic which is a predefined lower limit threshold current.

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7. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that a square-wave signal of a certain frequency is used to switch a charge or discharge switch (3, 5) from an OFF position to an ON position to allow charging or discharging.

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8. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the charge or discharge switch (3, 5) is switched from the ON position to the OFF position when the absolute value of the current is equal to or greater than the event characteristic which is a predefined limit threshold current.

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9. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that a desired average current is achieved by varying the time characteristic and the event characteristic.

10. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that a time delay is predefined so that the charge or the discharge switch is switched to the ON position according to the predefined time delay, the predefined time delay being set to trigger when the absolute value of the current equals or is greater than a predefined current threshold.

11. Apparatus as according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the current is not regulated within a current band and exhibits gaps.

12. Method for charging a piezoelectric element in a system, characterized in that a current of the system is regulated as a function of a time characteristic and an event characteristic to achieve an effective low average current.

13. Method for charging or discharging a piezoelectric element (1 and/or 11₁, 12₁, ... 1n₁) of a fuel injection system, characterized in that a current of the fuel injection system is regulated as a function of a time characteristic and an event characteristic to achieve an effective low absolute average current.

14. Method as according to claims 11 or 12, characterized in that the charge or discharge switch (3, 5) of the system is switched from an OFF position to an ON position or from the ON position to an OFF position, respectively to allow or stop charging or discharging when an absolute value of the current is respectively equal to or greater than or less than the event characteristic which is a predefined

limit threshold current.

15. Method as according to claims 11, 12 or 13,
characterized in that a charge or discharge switch (3, 5)
of the system is switched from the OFF position to the ON
position to allow charging or discharging at a predefined
time of the time characteristic after the absolute value of
the current is equal to or less than the event
characteristic which is a predefined lower limit threshold
current.

16. Method as according to claims 11 or 12, characterized
in that a square-wave signal of a certain frequency is used
to switch a charge or discharge switch (3, 5) from an OFF
position to an ON position to allow charging or discharging
and characterized in that the charge or discharge switch
(3, 5) is switched from the ON position to the OFF position
when the absolute value of the current is equal to or
greater than the event characteristic which is a predefined
upper limit threshold current.

17. Method for charging or discharging a piezoelectric
element (1 and/or 11, 12, ... 1n) of a fuel injection
system, characterized in that a definition is made, prior
to charging or discharging, for an absolute value of the
current for charging or discharging the piezoelectric
element (1 and/or 11, 12, ... 1n) as a function of a time
characteristic of the fuel injection system.

18. Application in particular eligible for use in a fuel
injection system, the fuel injection system according to
any of the foregoing claims, the fuel injection system

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preferably using a double acting control valve.

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